

As President Obama said Tuesday:

To those people who put so much hope and energy and optimism into the political process, I would say to them that the world is watching and inspired by their participation, regardless of what the ultimate outcome of the election was.

This resolution is not about the election in Iran. Rather, it is about the fundamental right to free speech, free press, and free expression of the Iranian people.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for as much time as I may consume.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### TRAVEL PROMOTION ACT

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, the business of the Senate, now that we have had the final vote on the supplemental here in the Senate, will be the Travel Promotion Act. That is a piece of legislation that is widely bipartisan. We have passed it by unanimous consent through the Senate Commerce Committee and brought it to the floor of the Senate with very substantial Republican and Democratic support. I am an original author of the legislation called the Travel Promotion Act, but a good many Republicans are cosponsors and colleagues on the Democratic side are as well. It should not be controversial. Yet getting that bill to the floor of the Senate required the filing of a cloture motion, which means, just on the motion to proceed, we had to wait 2 days and then have a vote on whether we could actually proceed to the motion to proceed to the legislation itself. That passed, I believe, 90 to 6. Then we had 30 hours postcloture.

We have been in a waiting position to try to determine can we get to this bill. Let me make the point that this is a piece of legislation that is almost unique, in the sense that, No. 1, it is very bipartisan and, No. 2, the Congressional Budget Office says it is going to reduce the Federal budget deficit.

Let me say that again. The Congressional Budget Office says this legislation will actually reduce the Federal budget deficit by very close to \$500 million over 10 years. There ought not be substantial controversy about this legislation.

What we are working on and have been working on for some hours is to try to determine how we get, now, on the bill and agree on amendments. We have had lists back and forth of what amendments might or might not be of-

fered. We have not been able at this point to agree on the list. We are not asking for a finite list, just a list on how to begin. There have been so many amendments that have been proposed that have nothing at all to do with the legislation, so we are working back and forth. It appears we are not going to be able to reach agreement on a list of how we begin with these amendments this evening, but my hope remains that perhaps tomorrow we will be able to have some kind of agreement on a list that would allow us to proceed to the Travel Promotion Act.

Let me mention briefly that this legislation is not controversial. Travel promotion means that our country would begin to address a problem. What is that problem? The fact is, we have many fewer visitors from abroad to this country, in terms of international tourism, which is very job creating, strongly supportive of economic growth because international tourists spend a lot of money. On average I believe they spend somewhere around \$4,500 per trip when they come to this country, for hotels and car rentals and airplanes and tourist attractions and so on. It is very job creating.

The fact is, we have far fewer tourists coming to this country from abroad than we had in the year 2000. That is a very serious problem; we have fallen substantially behind other countries that are aggressively marketing their countries for destination by international travelers. Italy, France, Great Britain, Spain, Australia—the list goes on and on of countries that say come to our country, travel here, visit here, be part of the experience in our country. Our country is not involved in that. It is as if there is a competition and we are not competing.

We put together a piece of legislation that would create and promote international destination travel to our country because it will surely create jobs and certainly be beneficial to our economy. As I said, it has wide support throughout the industry, throughout this Chamber, with Republicans and Democrats, and it actually reduces the Federal budget deficit. It is pretty hard to find a piece of legislation such as that.

Despite all that broad support and the fact it passed out of the Commerce Committee unanimously, we are having trouble getting it to the floor in a way that has amendments offered and in the regular order we consider this legislation.

As of tonight we are not able to reach an agreement on a list, but I remain hopeful. As we continue to exchange and have discussions about beginning this process and agreeing to amendments that can be debated, my hope remains that perhaps tomorrow we will be able to agree to such a list.

I believe others will have additional comments tomorrow as these discussions continue. My hope is we will be successful.

I have a number of unanimous consent requests I wish to offer.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DORGAN. I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN ALBANIA

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I am proud to cosponsor S. Res. 182, recognizing the democratic accomplishments of the people of Albania and expressing the hope that the parliamentary elections on June 28 maintain and improve the transparency and fairness of democracy in Albania. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution.

As Chairman of the Helsinki Commission, I am aware of what Albania has accomplished since its first multiparty elections in 1991, but I also know what a struggle it has been. Albania was under a ruthless and isolationist communist regime for decades. While not part of the former Yugoslavia, it was also impacted by the conflicts in neighboring and nearby Balkan countries in the 1990s, which was a setback for the entire region.

The promise of NATO membership did much to encourage progress in Albania in recent years. While problems relating to the rule of law and fight against corruption persisted, we supported Albania's NATO membership with the understanding that reforms will continue. The State Department in particular emphasized that other NATO members continued the reform process after joining the Alliance. That is our hope for Albania as well.

This resolution more actively expresses our hope as well as expectation that Albania live up to international standards it has accepted, in particular as they relate to the holding of elections. There are concerns about these elections, especially in regard to new voter identification cards and their distribution in time to allow citizens to vote. Even if Election Day does go smoothly, it is unfortunate that there was a delay in preparations—which causes confusion, frustration and suspicion among the Albanian electorate.

Albania is a good friend of the United States, and by passing this resolution we are investing in that relationship to make it grow. We want Albania to succeed, and this resolution will hopefully encourage Albania to hold successful elections on June 28. I believe the resolution is balanced, raising concern while noting progress and clearly favoring no particular political party. While those currently in power may have the additional responsibilities that come with governance, all parties have a role to play in order to make these elections meet international standards.